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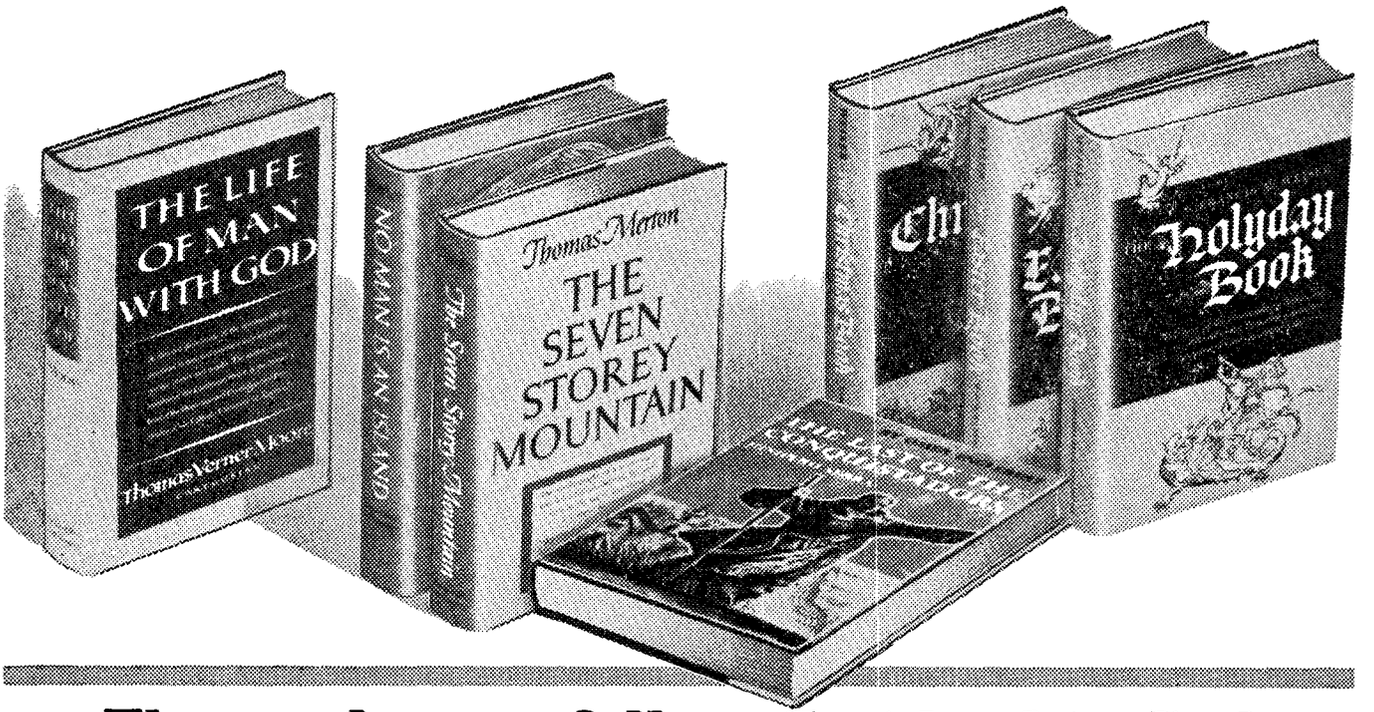

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THE
Commonweal
A Weekly Review of Public Affairs, Literature, and the Arts
THIRTY-THIRD YEAR OF PUBLICATION

week by week

THE AMERICAN DREAM

AMERICA has a new cultural hero—the TV quiz winner—in the person of Charles L. Van Doren. As everyone knows, Mr. Van Doren has at this writing defeated all comers in a weekly TV quiz game called "Twenty One," has already won the fabulous sum of $138,000, and shows no signs of faltering. Mr. Van Doren's name figures in every conversation we overhear, or at least it seems that way; he has been hailed in print as a genius; jokes about him are already a staple with TV and radio comedians; newspapers run stories about him not as TV news, but on their front pages. Finally, he has been immortalized on the cover of *Time* magazine.

Part of Mr. Van Doren's celebrity seems to be due to the facts of his identity, which make for certain ironies in terms of his present situation. Now involved in inescapably low-brow TV entertainment, Mr. Van Doren is an instructor of English and a member of a distinguished academic and literary family. His father has long been an exponent of liberal humanistic education, stressing ideas rather than information, and a criterion of wisdom rather than utility. This is the kind of education young Mr. Van Doren himself received. Yet he has skyrocketed to fame as a kind of memory wizard, whose mind is a storehouse for an incredible number of unrelated and obscure facts.

Aside from Mr. Van Doren himself, however, we are fascinated by the whole phenomenon of the wildly lucrative quiz show and the elevation of the successful contestant to the status of folk hero. The quiz show is not, of course, a uniquely American institution—Italian airwaves, we know, are now carrying passionate cries over 64,000 *lira* —but preoccupation with this kind of vault to fame and riches is, we think, part of the classic American *cultus.*

In song and story, America has ever been the land of unlimited opportunity, where any man could strike it rich, and the pot of gold lay just over the horizon. Our Presidents come from log cabins and our corporation heads once worked as shipping clerks. The American dream of success —material success—is expressed in Franklin's *Autobiography* and the gospel of work, but also and more accurately, perhaps, in the Horatio Alger tales. Ragged Dick had sterling qualities to be sure, but so did every American boy. The one thing needful, in the Alger version of the myth, was to be in the right place at the right time—to save the millionaire's daughter from the runaway horse, for example, and thus, through luck and pluck, be made president of the company. This is the pattern of the quiz show success. Fame and fortune lie in the laps of the gods, and the best preparation for the moment of greatness is simply to be alert and ready for the call.

MR. VAN DOREN'S success is particularly pertinent in this regard, because he has been rewarded not so much for knowledge as for luck and pluck as a gambler. The quiz game which has so far won him $138,000 ("Twenty One") is based on the card game *vingt-et-un* or, as it is more popularly called, blackjack. This is a game requiring shrewdness, courage and the ability to bluff. It is a game Mr. Van Doren learned, presumably, in the army rather than the groves of academe.

The quiz show also reinforces the cherished American belief in democracy and individualism. We affirm, with Jackson and Emerson, the worth of the individual regardless of what or who he is, and we rejoice that success for quiz contestants cuts across all class lines. As our legacy of trans-

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In France and England during the Middle Ages it was the custom of wealthy parishioners to donate candles tall as themselves for use on shrine altars.

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cendentalism leads us to distrust institutions, systems and the discipline of training, we delight in the confusion of experts at the hands of the lowly.

It has been said that TV quizzes, and Charles Van Doren particularly, have fostered a new respect for learning in this country. We fear not. With all respect for Mr. Van Doren, who is a highly intelligent and cultivated man, his performances have had nothing to do with learning or with thought. Americans have always venerated the fact, and the quiz show has merely underlined this aspect of our culture.

Further, these facts are materially useful: they earn money for those who know them. In the American tradition, they are respected for this material value, not in any sense as knowledge for the sake of knowledge. A professor friend has told us, in sorrow, of a young woman who is taking his course in Greek mythology in the hope that she may qualify as a quiz contestant.

We wish Mr. Van Doren good luck in his efforts at "Twenty One," and in his role of popular hero. He seems an estimable young man, and we could have idols far worse than he. Nevertheless, his sudden rise to fame is not, we are afraid, the presage of a cultural renaissance. At best, it is a cultural phenomenon of curious interest.

SUEZ FORMULA

LONG BEFORE the Suez crisis, which it had so large a part in enkindling, Israel was acutely conscious that it was living in an embattled world. Many of its farmsteads have had a distinctly military character; a number of the Israeli women are trained and armed as troops. Raids and reprisals across Israel's borders have been commonplace. And its very existence has been under constant challenge, as a number of hostile Arab leaders refuse to recognize even its right to national existence or to enter into any negotiations with Israeli leaders.

This nation is now called upon to make an act of trust—in these same Arab leaders, or at least in the determination of the United Nations and/or the United States to enforce due compliance on Egypt's part. How much can the Israelis count on the trustworthiness of the private pledges said to have been made by certain adversaries or on UN follow-through? How far can Israel expect rigid guarantees of its economic and political security by the United States, if it now withdraws from the Gaza Strip in order to facilitate a Suez settlement?

Under Mr. Truman this country had a large hand in the postwar establishment of the nation of Israel. We are pledged to preserve its national territorial integrity. On the other hand our own self-preservation in this embattled world underlines the stakes America has in the lands of the Arab nations. There are the key airbases in North Africa and the Middle East, vital deterrents to a Soviet attack, and the vast oilfields of Saudi Arabia, Iraq and other lands, essential to the prosperity and strength of our allies in Western Europe. There are the Suez Canal itself and the Syrian pipelines by means of which the oil gets to the Mediterranean on the way to European homes and factories. Only the mildness of the present winter there has so far kept the blocking of the Canal from materializing into a paralyzing blow.

Because this is an embattled world in which naked power is the main determinant, Israel, as a tiny nation upon which other, mightier nations are not dependent, has little choice. It has to recognize that in this cold-war world a double standard is inevitable: the Soviet Union's bloody and treacherous subjection of the Hungarian people goes unpunished, while Israel's foray against the Sinai peninsula may lead to economic sanctions on the part of the United Nations.

But if this country is compelled to protect our stakes in the various Arab lands and Israel cannot but yield, the question does not end there. American responsibility will not subside with a restoration of the 1949 boundaries. And that will put the directors of our foreign policy to one of their severest tests—as it will those in the United Nations dedicated to the achievement of security and peace for all peoples. In fact, if Israel's yielding now to the UN should result in its renewed harassment and eventual extinction, the eighty-member organization will simply have had its day.

MR. EISENHOWER AND THE GOP

PRESIDENT EISENHOWER has had considerable success in his task of selling "modern Republicanism" to the country at large. But he has obviously had less success with certain elements in his own party, and anti-Eisenhower whispers inside the GOP have been growing louder and louder in recent weeks.

Secretary of the Treasury Humphrey, who speaks for the business and conservative elements in the Republican Party, recently expressed his open disagreement with the President on the budget. The

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board of directors of the National Association of Manufacturers overwhelmingly adopted a resolution sharply critical of the President, for the first time since he took office. In the House, Republican Representative Claire Hoffman of Michigan said: "The President and his left-wing, free-spending international one-world advisers propose to disinfect, fumigate, unify and remake the Republican party." Describing himself as one of President Eisenhower's "loyal supporters, one who keeps him from going too far," Congressman Hoffman suggested that the President run in 1960 as a Democrat.

The real climax of recent anti-Eisenhower activity inside the GOP, however, came in Chicago, when conservative Republicans gathered to discuss "Real Republicanism versus 'Modern' Republicanism." By the time they finished, there was not much doubt about where they stood. Senator Joseph McCarthy denounced Mr. Eisenhower's atoms-for-peace plan as a potential gift of twenty-two hundred atomic bombs to the Soviet Union. The defeated Senator Herman Welker of Idaho warned that the GOP "must quit flitting around and trying to imitate the left-wing Democrat liberals"; he won a great ovation when he said that the UN would not survive "if it came to my vote" and again when he boasted: "My friends, I never voted for five cents of foreign aid." Senator Jenner was there, calling for a strong (translation: anti-Eisenhower) Congress. Former Governor of Utah J. Bracken Lee won the crowd by saying, "I like McCarthy's methods" and by his offer to lead a tax rebellion to deprive "big government" of its operating revenues. The Chicago meeting was, in short, a real gathering of the Republican anti-Eisenhower clan.

All this may make it seem as if President Eisenhower will have a rough time inside his own party in the months ahead. But we do not think he will have any really serious trouble, as long as meetings like the one in Chicago are fully reported. There is, after all, nothing like reading the remarks of the McCarthys, Jenners, Welkers and Lees inside the Republican party to make one really pro-Eisenhower.

THE D.A.R. AND AMERICAN BOYS

THE MASTODON, long extinct as a scientific specimen, is still with us on the cultural scene. For most Americans the most notable specimen is the organization known as Daughters of the American Revolution. For the D.A.R. many Americans have even been able to develop a certain fondness. As long as it is true to its chosen reserve of massive triviality, they can regard it with detached interest as something indigenous to America. But occasionally the realities of our national life impinge upon the consciousness of the D.A.R. and, roused to its full energies, it lumbers heavily across the cultural landscape.

Most recently, a patriotic observance of Lincoln's birthday was abruptly halted when a local D.A.R. leader would not allow a boy of Mexican descent to carry the flag. In Denver the State Industrial School for Boys had planned a program directed by Mrs. Charlotte Rush, D.A.R. chairman for the Lincoln's Day committee. But she objected to the arrangements, saying "I wouldn't want a Mexican to carry Old Glory, would you? It just wouldn't seem right." Mrs. Rush had further objections because, she said, half of the boys in the institution were Mexicans.

When the superintendent pointed out that all the boys were American citizens she said that she had not investigated their place of birth; she had made her judgment on the basis of their Spanish names. Most of the Mexicans, Mrs. Rush "presumed," were born in America. But they had parents "who came here from Mexico—they are Mexican boys, not American boys." Such statements raise all kinds of wonderful questions, such as, "When is an American not an American?" and "Should we allow new citizens to indulge in patriotic gestures?"

These questions were given sharp answers by the flood of protests that resulted from the incident. For the national president of the D.A.R., Representatives, Senators, Governors and the Mexican Ambassador to the Organization of American States immediately objected to Mrs. Rush's statements. And she herself tendered a belated apology. One can hope that those who share her original sentiments will find here a salutary lesson.

After fifteen months as an associate editor of The Commonweal, Philip Scharper has resigned in order to join the editorial staff of Sheed and Ward. We hope that Mr. Scharper's duties in the field of book publishing will permit him to continue to contribute to our pages, and our warmest wishes go with him. This week Richard Horchler joins The Commonweal as an associate editor. Mr. Horchler, who has contributed frequently to this magazine in recent years, comes to The Commonweal from the faculty of St. Peter's College in Jersey City. We are happy to welcome him to the editorial staff.

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The Nun in Literature

"THE QUIET, REAL DRAMA OF THE DEDICATED WOMAN IS REVEALED OBLIQUELY AND INTERMITTENTLY, WHEN IT IS REVEALED AT ALL"

JEAN HOLZHAUER

WITH THE NUN in literature as with the Nun in life, one begins by noticing how quiet she is and goes on to be surprised at how many. What to the initial glance appears as a backdrop of identicals, subdued by habit and manner into the geometry of a formal garden, inspection reveals to be an array of individuals; the garden blooms, it seems, variously if not riotously, and not always with the aspect of flowers in crannied walls.

What lends the Nun force and value for literary uses is that which weights all potential material: conflict and the resolution of conflict. Were it not for the widely held supposition that the story of a Nun must be as seamless and unperturbed as her manner, she would doubtless appear in literature even oftener and more convincingly than she does. Few writers have seen past the seemly facade of the convent to give us more than literary convention in a habit, and very often mediocre insight and talent have conspired to make melodrama of the most obvious components of religious life. In English and American literature the quiet, real drama of the dedicated woman is revealed obliquely and intermittently, when it is revealed at all.

It must be noted, in defense of authors who act as the Nun's literary *entrepreneurs,* that the Nun's life lends itself less readily than most others to interpretation. The translation of spiritual values into the comprehensible terms of literature is in itself formidable, and if it is so for poets with the media of poetic insight and compression at their command, it is doubly so for prose writers. Only those with a high degree of spiritual understanding and a corresponding gift of expression can succeed, and in this connection it is notable that Gerard Manley Hopkins, whose *Wreck of the Deutschland* singularly expresses the Nun, found virtually a new vocabulary of sensitivity to represent Divine love.

There are so many other obstacles to writing about the Nun that it is a kind of secular "miracle" that she is written about at all. It is clearly no accident that the best Nun stories come from Catholic writers; in order to write, one must know, and the Nun is explainable only in a Catholic context. This is, of course, not to say that the non-Catholic is disqualified from writing about the Nun. One of the most delightful and convincing glimpses of her—a pair of her, indeed, in faithful representation of outside view—occurs in J. D. Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye,* in an episode projecting her against the exacerbated sympathies of a teen-age boy. But the Nun remains for many non-Catholics outside the experience from which they draw their material.

Even for the Catholic writer the Nun is a special problem. Unlike priests, many of whose lives are semi-public and accessible, she remains remote both by nature of her seclusion in community and of the character of that life, subduing as it does inward struggle to outward harmony, interior grace to inconspicuous social gracefulness. Perception of the Nun as a person is precisely what her rule operates to prevent. In general, two kinds of Nuns escape this leavening: the Nun assigned to mission work, where hardship and sometimes adjustment of her rule can sharpen her individuality, and the home front Nun whose personality and abilities are such that not even the most gladly and conscientiously accepted discipline can obscure them. In literature, the mission Nun is well represented in A. J. Cronin's *The Keys of the Kingdom* and in Rumer Godden's story of an Anglican mission community, *Black Narcissus,* and although it is subject to consideration on other levels, Kathryn Hulme's fictionalized biography, *The Nun's Story,* also falls into this category.

ONE MORE difficulty attends literary interpretation of the Nun by contemporary authors, and this might best be defined as social climate. In the United

Mrs. Holzhauer writes frequently for *Today,* The Commonweal, and other publications.

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States a generation or two ago, religious conflict raged openly. The real Nun was an arresting figure by virtue of her novelty and others' superstition; her peculiar commitment within a hated minority made her so. Admittedly, this situation did not render her more accessible as literary material, but it did render her dramatic, a lure to the imagination. Today she has lost much of this dubious claim to literary attention. As she and her works become known, if only remotely, through newspaper accounts of orphanage building programs and pictures of occasional Nuns piloting helicopters or enjoying a Virginia Reel, her reception in the public mind has flattened from fear and awe to commonplace acceptance. To most people, a majority of writers included, the Nun of today must seem merely another, less clamorous kind of career woman, tolerable and even necessary in a utilitarian sense, but hardly romantic.

This change in climate has had demonstrable effect upon literary treatment of the Nun. In 1908, F. Marion Crawford published a novel called *The White Sister,* which sold out several editions, became a highly successful play, and was eventually filmed (starring, if memory serves, Lillian Gish). For nearly a quarter century, this story both supplied and created public demand for a Nun type. Sister Giovanna, the heroine, does not differ essentially from heroines of popular secular literature of the period. (It could, indeed, be reasonably argued that *The White Sister is* secular literature.) Believing her lover dead, she becomes a Nun, not without pretty scruples as to the purity of her intention. Discovering her lover alive, she remains a Nun, not without intense suffering. Through a series of remarkable events including the revelation of her beloved Superior as her own real mother, she is released from her vows to save her lover's life, not without overwhelming joy. As can be seen, the story is conceived in terms of sheer bathos, yet for millions, and over a considerable period of time, Sister Giovanna was The Nun.

It is inconceivable that such a type would find wide public acceptance today, any more than *Elsie Dinsmore* would appeal to modern youngsters. But we are apparently rid only of a style, and not of the need for a type. We have replaced Giovanna with another type: a breezy composite of capability, sentiment and pluck, with a sense of humor. She can drive a jeep, she can coyly manage her pastor, and for all her public knows she uses prayer and meditation as a more worldly woman might use Miltown. This Nun was established in the national consciousness by such stories as *The Bells of St. Mary's* and *Come to the Stable,* and to judge by the stream of books, fiction, non-fiction and cartoons, she will be with us for yet a while longer.

Besides the Nun in these marketable guises, other versions do reassuringly exist. Even in the romantic first quarter of the century, she was not always a tragic figure of renunciation ("Do not touch me, Roderick, for I am vowed to One greater than we!"), nor is she today invariably discovered playing fictional second base. Attempts to particularize her have been made by writers of every degree of ability; one of her most fascinating appearances occurs in a series of novels for teen-agers published around 1920 under the pen name of Sister Clementia. In these, the Nun is a kind of religious Lady from Philadelphia who solves her family's knotty problems by moral precept and example. A generation of Catholic school children met the Nun in literature for the first time in her; some say they have never felt the same toward Nuns, real or imaginary, since.

ON A MORE serious and much higher plane, the Nun is found repeatedly in the sensitive and sympathetic stories of Sylvia Townsend Warner, Katherine Mansfield, D. H. Lawrence, Franz Werfel, Bruce Marshall, Sean O'Faolain, Frank O'Connor, Antonia White, J. F. Powers, Caroline Gordon and Mary McCarthy, to name only a representative handful of superior writers who have made her their theme. Their approaches to the Nun vary in method, even in underlying attitude, but they may be properly called alike in sympathy since they have a common purpose: to construct an artistic representation of reality. At one extreme of purpose and method, we could place Werfel's *The Song of Bernadette,* the reverent fictionalized account of a Nun saint; at the other, Mary McCarthy's closeups of Nuns doubtless remembered from her convent school days. Among the shades and gradations between, a curiosity is Aldous Huxley's "Nuns at Luncheon," a short story having nothing to do with the community refectory but utilizing the story of a Nun's personal degradation as a springboard for some sophisticated reflections on the uses of literature generally.

The Nun has often been individualized with best effect by contrasting one Nun with another, youth with age, personality with personality. Variations of the mother-daughter relationship, so infinite and so tender, are offered in stories like *Cradle Song,* a play recently revived with some success, and are implicit in most literature concerned with actual convent life. This double view of the Nun, as green girl and as seasoned religious, is the explicit theme of Sean O'Faolain's *Teresa,* the short account of a young and an old Nun together on pilgrimage, and the young Nun's subsequent departure from the order. In this and similar stories, the testing of the younger Nun's vocation is observed with understanding and love underlying the strict discipline of her elders; it is the affectionate and amused tolerance of the Nun looking back at herself,

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and one of the most convincing and affecting treatments of the Nun in literature.

The wise and clever Nun whose mild demeanor hides the worldly and spiritual wisdom with which she confutes the irreligious appears with increasing frequency in stories designed as entertainments, never more effectively than in E. A. Shepherd's *Murder in a Nunnery*. Traces of so flattering a presentation of the Nun turn up in a great many Nun stories, in fact, and are even echoed in Antonia White's *Frost in May*, in the conflict between the schoolgirl heroine and her teachers who, although rigid and unsympathetic, have a kind of tacit last word. The same implication occurs, although probably unintentionally, in Mary McCarthy's stories of convent school life. Admit it or not, the implication seems to say, the Nun knows more than you of eternal purposes and verities.

Certainly the most striking among recent portrayals of the Nun is Caroline Gordon's Sister Immaculata in *The Malefactors*. Said to be modeled after a real Nun friend of the author, she is terrifying and wholly lovable, penetrating, sensible, and—in the nicest way—mad. Whatever may be said of her presentation or her reception by the reading public, for present purposes it is notable that she is the most vivid among the few highly intelligent Nuns of modern literature. For one of the obvious facts about the intellectual Nun is that she appears far less often in literature than in life.

THUS SOME of the varying attitudes of authors toward the Nun. The attitude of the reading public, even of the more discriminating segments, is more difficult to assess. Even critics on the higher plateaus of taste sometimes appear to harbor a certain tacit preference for the stereotyped Nun, pious, friendly, occasionally comic, and always unchallenging. Part of this preference may be laid to a distrust of strong-minded women, especially, perhaps, strong-minded Nuns; but there is more to it than this, and among other things there is the specter of fear that the Nun, if presented in literature as human and fallible, will somehow give away the Catholic position in a hostile world. "Let her be coy, let her be innocuous, but dear God don't let her be complicated," might be the prayer of Catholic readers who are so minded. One excellent critic recently referred to J. F. Powers's "Nuns who think they are priests with a difference," and a short story about an unsympathetic Nun teacher was the partial cause of banning the Catholic magazine in which it appeared from a U.S. diocese for a period of years. What constraints such phenomena place upon the Catholic writer who would write about Nuns is a matter for serious conjecture.

The fact remains that while Mr. Powers, Miss White, Miss McCarthy and others present the Nun as a particularized character on a much higher literary level than that of *The White Sister* or *Come to the Stable*, it is these latter excruciating simplifications that reach the widest public, and, in effect, present the Nun to the world. Too much, perhaps, has already been said about the cultural climate necessary to pave the way for writers, and few people believe seriously that a demand alone can create a supply; still it is possible that several leagues remain to be traversed before contemporary literature can bring us the real Nun, as wise and innocent, as tangible and mysterious, as familiar and completely inexplicable as, in life, she truly is.

AMBIGUITY AND MISUNDERSTANDING

Religion in Toynbee

J. N. MOODY

ARNOLD TOYNBEE occupies an unusual position in the intellectual world. None would question his competence. His learning is attested to by a lifetime of scholarly production. He is unquestionably honest, and he is deeply disturbed by what he terms the spiritual crisis of the mid-twentieth century. But while his reputation has spread on the lecture circuits and in the women's clubs, he has met consistent criticism from his professional colleagues. He speaks eloquently of the necessity of religion, yet he has aroused antagonism from serious Christians and bitter rebukes from Jews.

In part, Toynbee is an enigma because his views have been in constant evolution. An established scholar in classical history, he was drawn into the field of contemporary history by government service in two world wars and by his position as Director of Studies at the Royal Institute of International Affairs. The

Father Moody, a regular contributor, now teaches at Notre Dame College of Staten Island.

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first war came as a shock and stimulated his *A Study of History*, one work to which the overworked adjective "monumental" genuinely applies. The first six volumes were finished before the second conflict. They were built around a theory of the rise and fall of civilizations that accented the value of religion and stressed the role of Christianity, particularly in its orthodox Catholic form. When this recondite study appeared in a single volume abridgement, Toynbee became a figure in *Time* and other vestibules of the world of thought.

As the final four volumes appeared after World War II, the tones of concern for the fate of the West deepened in Toynbee, as did his doubts about the validity of Christianity. He developed a kind of syncretism, in which all the higher religions would contribute, but none could claim to be the final truth.

The most important clue to Toynbee's thinking seems to be his growing aversion to nationalism, which he sees as a collective madness destroying modern man. His interpretation of history is a conscious rejection of national history in favor of the wider unit which he terms "civilization." The second great war deepened his distaste for political parochialism, and he extended the term to include religious institutions which would reopen "the door to self-centeredness by casting themselves in rivalry with one another and ignoring the rest of mankind, for the privileged role of being 'God's Chosen People'. . ."

IN THE recently published *An Historian's Approach to Religion* (Oxford. $5.), Toynbee gives a summary of his views on religion, with a partially successful attempt to give them coherence. His position may be stated as follows: The historian has a special competence in observing human affairs, for he alone consciously attempts to go beyond the self-centeredness which is at once a necessity of life and a sin that leads to distortion. This transcendence does not come easily to the historian. To achieve it at all, he must find some pattern in history, for if there is none history is impossible and he becomes the victim of some unconscious pattern which he refused to bring to the light of consciousness.

Mankind, in its search for Reality, moves naturally to religion, and begins with the worship of nature. When civilization appears, this gives way to the worship of one's own collective power as embodied in a parochial community and organized in a parochial state. When this leads to disastrous wars, it is superseded in turn by two other forms of Man Worship: the idol of an oecumenical community in which man could live in peace over a wide area (e.g., the Roman Empire), or the worship of man as a spiritually self-sufficient philosopher who had the strength to stand alone (e.g., Stoicism). While these were improvements, they had fatal weaknesses, for it is a mistake to worship man at all, since man is not God, and because the worship of man, individually or collectively, gives no clue to the problem of suffering. Awareness of these defects makes possible the rise of the higher religions. They taught a God who was love as well as power, and inculcated an acceptance of suffering as an opportunity of acting on the promptings of love and pity. Through the participation of a self-sacrificing divine person who took the role of a Savior, they reconciled elements in human life that were apparently irreconciliable.

These higher religions became the most formidable adversaries of the worship of collective human power in the oecumenical empires which faced decay because of their failure to satisfy deep human aspirations. The two came into conflict, and when the empires were about to lose, they attempted to save themselves by incorporating and exploiting the new dynamic in religion (e.g., Constantine). This presented the higher religions with an insoluble dilemma: if they rebuffed the offers of reconciliation by their former opponents, they would be untrue to their mission to preach to all men; if they accepted, they would be diverted to secular purposes. Islam and Orthodox Protestantism succumbed almost at the moment of their birth, Eastern Christianity soon after the offer. Catholic Christianity was partly preserved by the collapse of the Western Roman Empire.

A parallel dilemma forced the higher religions into an accommodation with the prevailing philosophical currents (Hellenism, in the case of Christianity), for they could not talk to the intelligentsia of their day unless they translated their teachings into an idiom the intellectuals could understand. But this, too, caused a problem because the gospel would be hardened into the mold of one phase of philosophical speculation, and thus it would lose something of its flexibility and universality. Toynbee argues that these two misfortunes, subjection to state power and to Greek philosophy, overcame Christianity early in its history.

More serious for the author is the claim of the higher religions, particularly those of Jewish origin, to uniqueness and finality in authoritarian terms, which to Toynbee "look like almost impious proclamations of a deliberate reversion to the self-centeredness that is the hall-mark of 'Original Sin'."

AS TOYNBEE sees it, Christianity served the needs of the West despite these imperfections until the late Middle Ages, when the mistakes of the Papacy induced the disastrous shattering of the West's spiritual unity. Religious divisions, plus the rapid growth of scientific knowledge, led to the seventeenth century

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revolution against Western Christianity which replaced religion with technology as the paramount interest of modern man.

In discarding the Christian religious heritage, Western man rejected the doctrine of Original Sin, but he could not exorcise its reality. Thus as he went blithely forward under the assumption that his secularized version of life was both perfect and permanent, he was poorly prepared for the shocks of our age. Having divinized technology, he fell into disillusionment when it inevitably failed him—hence the great moral and intellectual vacuum of our time. For "religion is an essential element in human life which cannot ever be ignored or repressed for very long at a time." "Alternative attempts to fill this vacuum have constituted the unstable spiritual history of the Western world during the last 250 years." Thus came the deification of nationalism, which has been the prevalent religion of recent centuries, and this development in turn had as its logical result the idolatrous totalitarian worship of the state.

Despite all the claims made for it, technology has not been able to heal the wound inflicted on the Western world by the rejection of its ancestral religion. Rather it aggravated the damage while universalizing it. For technology made possible the Western conquest of the world, but it imparted a secularized version of itself to the peoples of Asia and Africa, thus involving them in the West's own spiritual crisis.

So here we stand in the mid-twentieth century. Toynbee feels that we cannot go back to Christianity, nor should we try, for it is too parochial and culture-bound to fill our needs. Our intellectual experience may chastise us sufficiently to re-open the road to religion, he thinks. We may be able to strip Christianity of its local and temporary Western aspects, as the Jesuit missionaries to the Orient tried to do in the seventeenth century. Certainly we must regain the capacity to radiate the spiritual counsels and truths that will enable man to fulfill his true end of glorifying God and enjoying Him forever.

THUS TOYNBEE states his position on religion in our time. There is much that is personal in this sincere search for spiritual foundations, without which, Toynbee would say, modern man cannot survive. What is depressing is that so earnest a man gives so little attention to the Christian message as it exists in its concrete historical reality in our age. Even when we take into account his extreme reaction to political parochialism, Toynbee remains an index of the work we must do before we can regain the mind of modern man.

Toynbee considers Christianity as an historical phenomenon without any reference to the truth of its claims, which are never seriously examined. Parallels are constantly sought between its history and that of other religions, particularly those of the Far East.

Some of these are suggestive; others exclude the very historical differences which one would expect him to stress. There is a disposition to consider the Buddhic religions as less corrupted by philosophical accretions than Christianity or Islam. Occasionally there are sweeping judgments that are impossible of verification. To cite only one: The Western Church would have become as completely subservient to the state as the Eastern "if the Roman Empire had not gone to pieces in the fifth, sixth, and seventh centuries of the Christian era."

There is ambiguity in Toynbee's position on the relation of religion to history. He knows that a religion must be restated in terms that a culture group can understand—that it must be embedded in history. Yet at the same time he deplores this obvious necessity. Nor does he see that the timeless truth a religion contains, and which he admires, may maintain its integrity and value as its essential truth is restated in a new context. What is missing here is the concept of a living Church which preserves Christ's truth amid all the flux of history. Within this premise, all Toynbee's impressive material could be rearranged and make sense.

Equally outside Toynbee's vision is the promised slow diffusion of God's Kingdom, which will lead to ultimate universality. He is particularly hostile to Israel's claims, though historically this "seed" has undergone a tremendous expansion in its Christian form. Curiously, he declares that it is neither more nor less incredible that Abraham might be singled out as a vehicle of "God's grace than the Earth should be singled out some millions of years ago as the home of physical life"!

Toynbee recognizes the difficulty of removing historical developments from a religion like Christianity. He uses the analogy of cleaning a painting by an old master so vigorously that nothing remains but the bare

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canvas. Yet he blithely suggests that the ecclesiastical supremacy of the Roman See and "a great deal of what is traditional Christian doctrine" may be rubbed off to make Catholic Christianity more appealing to universal mankind. He totally misses the meaning of the liturgy, and while paying tribute to the Church for her generous concessions to her Eastern brethren, he is unaware of recent liturgical reforms which are an example of her continuing vitality. Nor does he see that theology, which he views as hardening the crust of accidental accretions, is constantly at work on the deposit of faith, bringing to light new aspects as the domain of human knowledge widens.

The current spiritual crisis, which Arnold Toynbee has explored so fruitfully, is marked by many personal tragedies. Here is certainly one: a brilliant mind so shocked by the divisions of our century that it fails to face the central issue: has the Christian teaching any valid reason for maintaining its claim to be the unique revelation of God to man?

EXPLORING DIFFERENCES

Experiment in Conversation

JOHN C. CORT

IT IS COMMONLY believed that in Boston, "the home of the bean and the cod, the Lowells speak only to Cabots and the Cabots speak only to God." Or maybe it was the Lowells who occupied the position next to the throne. At any rate it is safe to say that neither of them have done much talking to the Boston Irish.

A year or so ago I was speaking at an interfaith meeting in a Unitarian parish hall in Boston. Also on the program were a Jewish judge and a lay leader in the Congregational Church. After we had got through mouthing our cheerful platitudes about co-operation and good fellowship, a man with a somewhat grim look rose in the back of the hall and announced, "Let's face it—we all hate each other's guts."

I would guess that in Boston the chasm existing between the Catholics and "the others" is wider and deeper than in most other parts of the country. To begin with, there are more Catholics in Boston, percentagewise, than any other large city in America. To continue with, they enjoy political control of the city and have periodically enjoyed control of the state. As one friendly visitor from Chicago put it, "Some of the people I met could not distinguish between the Church and the Democratic Party." He was talking about Catholics, but it could also be said of many Protestants.

The New England Yankee has a proud tradition and he does not yield control gladly. And the Catholic is supposed to have his ghetto, or ghettoes—the Irish ghetto and the Italian ghetto—and sometimes he does not escape from it too easily. Still I never met a Boston College professor who didn't know exactly where Harvard was located.

But a few years ago professor Samuel Beer, chairman of the department of government at Harvard, confessed that he didn't know where Boston College, one of the largest Catholic universities in the country, was located, although he had lived only a few miles away from it for over twenty years.

I don't think this made him very different from the average Harvard professor. What did make him different was that Beer decided to find out where Boston College was located and maybe to bring some of its professors into the same room with a group of his fellow faculty members from Cambridge, with a view to exploring some of the areas of friction and difference that impede friendship and cooperation between the two communities. Mr. Beer didn't know any B.C. professors himself well enough to try on this radical idea, but through a Catholic friend who did know some, a meeting was set up in the friend's home, a kind of neutral no man's land between the two camps. This was June, 1955.

Among those attending that first meeting were, on the Harvard side, besides Beer: Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., the historian; Seymour Harris, head of the department of economics; Louis Lyons, curator of the Nieman Foundation; Stan Miles, senior tutor of Dunster House; and Dr. Dean Clark, professor at the Harvard Medical School and director of Massachusetts General Hospital. On the Boston College side were Father William Kenealy, S.J., then dean of the Law School; Don White, associate dean of the Business School; Ed Hirsh, head of the English department; Paul Heffron, head of the department of history and government; Dick Sullivan, professor of law; and Bill Daly, professor of history.

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AS THINGS have turned out, those who attended did have something in common, namely, an interest in social justice and civil liberties. What they had in disagreement they proceeded to explore. At the end of a lively evening's talk, they agreed to take up the items *seriatim* at subsequent meetings.

As the meeting broke up, three of the Catholics stood out on the sidewalk discussing it. One of them said, "That was a surprise: I expected So-and-So to ride herd on the discussion all night, but he hardly said a word. And So-and-So—he has the reputation of being a terrible revolutionary, but I found him as reasonable a man as you could want to meet."

What the Harvards were saying about their new Catholic friends that night I don't know, but apparently they enjoyed the experience because most of them have been coming back ever since at approximately six-week intervals. If it goes no further, the experiment can already be declared a success.

Among the subjects discussed have been: Censorship, Federal Aid to Education, Adoption Problems (a perennial headache around Boston), Is the Catholic Press Free?, Anti-Catholicism is the Anti-Semitism of the Liberals, Tensions Between Jews and Catholics, Catholics in Politics, Is Belief in God Necessary to Social Cooperation?, and of course Birth Control.

One highlight was an appearance by Father John Courtney Murray, the Jesuit theologian, leading off a discussion of one of his favorite questions: "How much unity do we need, how much pluralism can we stand?" A most impressive man, was the consensus. One member of the group pointed out that it takes a good man to hold the floor without interruptions after the group has passed the two-beer mark and all tongues are unlimbered. But that night, he said, whenever Father Murray opened his mouth, all present listened in silence and respect.

A similarly impressive man was Dr. Paul Tillich of the Harvard Theological School, guest of honor on another occasion. Few could follow all the turnings of his deep and difficult theology, except to recognize a familiar landmark now and then, such as the doctrine of original sin, but all were moved by this wise and noble man in relentless pursuit of the truth.

One delightful evening was spent with former Governor Paul Dever discussing the conduct of Catholics in Massachusetts politics. More than one of those present, from both camps, were surprised and pleased to find such a well-read, urbane and witty egg-head on the shoulders of an Irish Catholic politician.

Other guests and members of the group, some of them invited to talk on their specialties, have included Mark Howe, professor at Harvard Law School; Monsignor Francis J. Lally, editor of the Boston *Pilot;* Gerry Berlin, regional counsel for the American Jewish Congress; Father Robert Drinan, S.J., dean of the

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B.C. Law School; Elting Morison, professor of history at M.I.T.; Jimmy O'Dea, district attorney of Middlesex County (Mass.); Lawrence Fuchs, Brandeis professor and author of *The Political Behavior of American Jews;* Joe Dever, Catholic novelist; Leo Pfeffer of the American Jewish Congress; Father George Casey, pastor and columnist for the Boston *Pilot;* and this writer.

AFTER A year and a half of meeting together, arguing together, drinking beer and eating cheese and crackers together, Sam Beer, founder and still chairman, summed it up this way: "For us on the Harvard side it has been an invaluable experience to learn at first hand that there is no truth in the old bromide about the Catholic Church being a monolithic community in which the priests hand down a stereotyped set of opinions to the laity. We learned that once beyond the area of dogma there is plenty of freedom for Catholics to disagree and criticize each other on questions of social and political policy. We heard them doing it."

Another Harvard member commented, "Trained as I have been in the American tradition that says you never talk about religious differences, I found it unusual and refreshing to find a group of people who come right out and say what they think—and still like each other afterwards." He thought the question of religion in the public schools was perhaps the one that had yielded least to the search for common ground.

This was the reaction of Bill Daly of B.C.: "I was surprised at the amount of agreement among us, particularly on social and political questions. But for me one of the best parts of it was just getting to know people who had only been names to me for many years. If you do a piece about it, mention the fact that John Cogley wrote in The Commonweal several years ago that the millenium would have arrived when Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., was invited to speak at Holy Cross. Well, we didn't swing that, but it was a result of our meetings that Schlesinger was invited by the Faculty Club to speak at Boston College. And a fine talk it was, on 'Conservatism,' very well attended and very well received by both students and faculty, lay and cleric."

Already the group has spawned one offspring. At least the last time I saw Father Kenealy he told me that he was helping to form a similar group composed of faculty members at Loyola and Tulane Universities in New Orleans.

Let's hope there will be others. It's a terrible thing to have to fall back on the old truisms, but it is remarkable how the ancient prejudices melt when exposed to the light of a little frank and pleasant conversation.

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THE USES OF PLATITUDE

FOR YEARS Americans lived in splendid isolation from the world's problems and thereby avoided many painful moral decisions. An American does not have to be very old to remember when "Let Them Keep It Over There" expressed the nation's general sentiments. "Over There" they had wars, power politics, dictators, extreme poverty, revolutions, political instability, the persecution of minorities, ancient national hatreds, religious dissension and outlandish ideologies. "Over Here" we lived, or pretended to live, in a garden of innocence. Protected as we were by our isolationism, we could afford to learn our morality from the broad strokes of the copy-book maxim. The casuists' tortuous reasoning struck us as sinister.

We had participated in bloody wars, to be sure, but we insisted firmly, and somewhat piously, that we did not believe in war; we had been seduced into them by wily Europeans. We rejected power politics out of hand but regarded ourselves as having the strength of ten because our hearts were pure. Dictators with their ideological gibberish we dismissed as merely absurd. We laughed at Stalin, Hitler and Mussolini for years before we grew apprehensive about them. Even when the prosperity bubble of the twenties burst and there were millions unemployed we never accepted poverty as more than a temporary dislocation. The American Way of Life, we never doubted, would ultimately provide abundance for all. Turkey dinners were served as a kind of symbol of faith and hope as well as charity at the public shelters on Thanksgiving.

The two-party system was never seriously threatened even during America's most revolutionary mood. Nor did we ever accept race hatred and religious prejudice as anything more than personal aberrations.

Other nations might nurse old grudges. We were different. The melting pot had purified every good American from such moral failings. We were ready to be friendly with all peoples as long as they kept their distance. The distance separating us from the wickedness beyond could, we believed, protect our innocence in a naughty world.

The second war changed all that. From Pearl Harbor to the present we have had to play a principal part in this world we never made. It has not been easy. We went into the postwar world, isolationism formally abandoned, with many of the old attitudes unchanged. We stepped out into the night rather like a Salvation lass fired with reformer's fervor. We were intent on preserving the image of American innocence. America, even America the world leader, could never be just another power playing the political game. We *were* in the world now but there in order to save the world from its own folly. Like the Salvation lass we brought doughnuts with us and distributed our scriptures from hundreds of information centers.

Inevitably we were forced to dabble in *Realpolitik,* for unlike the Salvation lass we were not only saving the world but protecting ourselves. In the world of power politics, we discovered somewhat to our amazement, we were a power, indeed the most powerful of all powers and from time to time it behooved us to act like one. But even as we made the necessary moves on the chess board, knowing the stakes were big, we clung to our Sunday-school public manners.

Not long ago Hans Morgenthau stated that those who said pious platitudes and moralistic clichés were being used as a sugar-coating for our foreign policy were wrong. The fact is, said Morgenthau, the platitude has not been sugar-coating at all—it *is* our foreign policy.

There is something to be said for Morgenthau's position. There was until very recently a tendency to identify the moral aspirations of the United Nations with the political imperatives of the United States. There has been a tendency to think of the United Nations as a substitute for a national policy rather than as an international body through which foreign policies are effectuated.

But Morgenthau has not said the last word, either. For whether we like it or not, America has used power and political cunning. On numerous occasions Mr. Dulles, and Mr. Acheson before him, have done so brilliantly and effectively. But Mr. Dulles, unlike his predecessor, is acutely aware of the need for Congressional and public support. He apparently realizes better than those who went before him that the Puritan legacy still has a strong grip on the United States. In any case he has reckoned with it. He and the Administration never cease to dress up their policies in copy-book maxims and moralisms. The Acheson State Department neglected to do this. Mr. Acheson, Mr. Kennan and others spoke like diplomats and explained their policies in essentially political terms. Look where it got them. They were portrayed as shifty Machiavellians with no concern for the moral order.

Mr. Dulles' famed moralisms are not without their method. They sow doubt among those who believe that all might already be lost. They sustain illusion among those who believe that innocence is still possible. They can be dispensed with when enough people are ready to distinguish between moralism and morality, as I am sure Mr. Dulles privately learned to do long ago.

JOHN COGLEY.

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BOOKS

FOR BROTHERHOOD

This *Books for Brotherhood* list includes books of general interest in the field of intergroup relations published during 1956 and late 1955. The books are chosen from among the many published during the period not for the information about any particular religious group, but because they do most to promote understanding among various groups. The list is the result of unanimous agreement by a representative committee with wide experience in evaluating books, on their recommendations of the best in the field, for children, young people, and adults.

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ADULT LIST

Catholic Viewpoint On Race Relations, by John LaFarge. Hanover House, $2.95.

Calmly persuasive, the distinguished Jesuit priest presents the Catholic attitude toward segregation, discrimination, integration, and the related problems affecting minorities on the American scene, and he does so with no tinge of sectionalism.

Dying We Live, edited by Helmut Gollwitzer and others. Pantheon, $4.50.

Rarely has man's tragic dignity been so sharply revealed as in these last letters and journals of Germans who lost their lives because they resisted Hitler. The young and the aged, men and women, write with courage, joy, and the profound insight that comes from the direct and willing confrontation of death.

My Lord, What a Morning! by Marian Anderson. Viking, $5.00.

The quietly charming autobiography of a great singer from her obscure place of birth to the stage of the Metropolitan Opera House, the first Negro to sing there, told with the simplicity, dignity, and graciousness that have always been associated with her.

Naught for Your Comfort, by Trevor Huddleston. Doubleday, $3.75.

A shocking and moving account of racial bigotry in South Africa as seen through the eyes of a courageous and articulate Anglican priest, who for twelve years has been fighting enforced segregation.

The Negro in American Culture, by Margaret Just Butcher, based on materials left by Alain Locke, Knopf, $4.50.

A fascinating reference book treating of a dozen fields of achievement records what the Negro has contributed to America, and equally important, what America has contributed to the Negro.

The Pitiful and the Proud, by Carl T. Rowan. Random House, $5.00.

At the request of the State Department, this well-known reporter went to Asia to explain the values of democracy. In his preface, the author admits, "These are not easy times for an American Negro to write a book about Asia," but the account is fascinating and informative, although dispiriting at times.

The Presence of Grace, by J. F. Powers. Doubleday, $2.95.

A book of short stories, by the accomplished author of **Prince of Darkness,** who again presents a collection of sharply delineated pastors, curates, and parishioners, seen with sure insight into the personal struggles that lie behind the trivial events of the Catholic's daily parish life.

The Sacrifice, by Adele Wiseman. Viking, $3.95.

An absorbing, warmly written first novel which embodies the Biblical story of Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac in the experiences of three generations of a Jewish family who flee Russian pogroms and settle in Canada.

Segregation: The Inner Conflict in the South, by Robert Penn Warren. Random House, $1.95.

An incisive report of conversations the author had with men and women in Kentucky, Tennessee, Arkansas, Mississippi, and Louisiana, in which he reveals the inner tensions caused by the processes of desegregation as they affect people in all walks of life.

CHILDREN'S AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S LIST

Abe Lincoln: Log Cabin to White House, by Sterling North. Random, $1.50. 9-12.

A simple warm biography which emphasizes his gentleness, humor, and humanity toward friends and foes.

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CHILDREN'S AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S LIST

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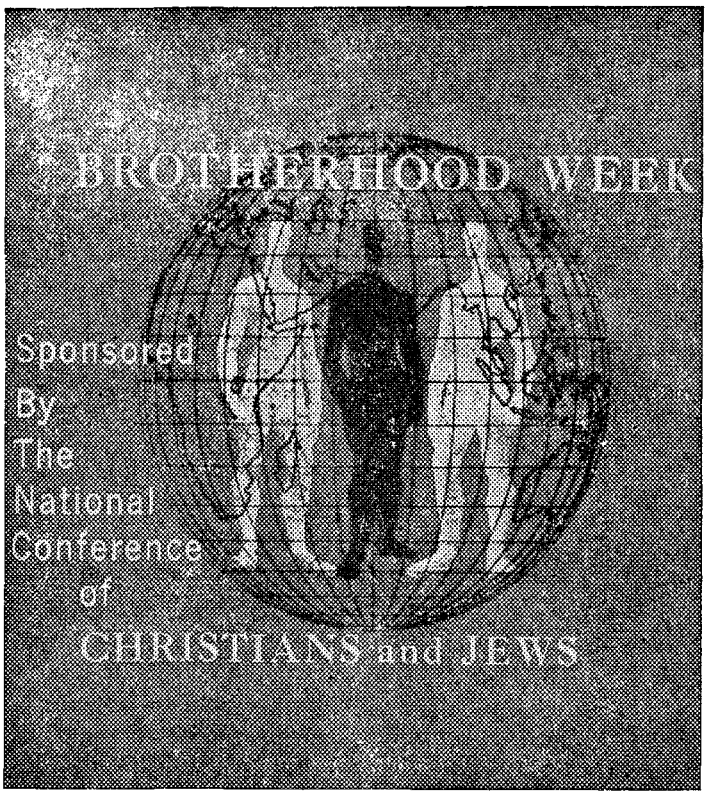

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CHILDREN'S AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S LIST

Christmas on the Mayflower, by Wilma Pitchford Hays. Coward, $2.50. 8-10.

How the Yule log which has "traditionally" destroyed old hatreds and misunderstanding restores peace between the Pilgrims and the sailors of the Mayflower.

A Friend Is "Amie", by Charlotte Steiner. Knopf, $2.25. 5-8.

A picture-story of two little girls, one French and one American, who learn some words of each other's language and become friends.

The Golden Bird, by Shannon Garst. Houghton, $2.25. 10-12.

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THE STAGE

THE CLIMATE OF ILLYRIA

THE SHAKESPEARWRIGHTS, an ensemble whose work I have insufficiently noted, are offering for a limited engagement in the chapel of St. Ignatius Church their spirited revival of "Twelfth Night." The charm of this production lies almost wholly in its merry energy and dash, a certain headlong impetuosity rare though not unique in our Shakespearean theater. To commend that is not, of course, to have told the tale of this most "high fantastical" of Shakespeare's comedies: one remembers that the climate of "Twelfth Night" is a weather of music; that the play opens and ends with song—is, indeed, awash with melody as much as, with water, is the foundering ship which casts Viola on the seacost of Illyria. It is a music of subtle complexity and infinite shading: a stately pavane with Olivia; winey and bravura in Sir Toby's accents; gravely lyrical in the speech of Viola, and all surfeit and honey in the mouth with Orsino. And into this golden chiming music of flesh and roses comes the rasping, rational voice of Malvolio, sick with self-love, insistently obtruding the wilful ego into a world of heedless and lovely spontaneity.

The voice is stilled, of course, though not without an ominous echo: the offender expunged and sent tumbling back into his swollen spleen. Indeed, the pattern recalls "The Merchant of Venice," that other liquid comedy of mannerly grief and the lustre of love, in which yet another black irritant is expelled from the golden ring. These plays belong to what Hazlitt calls Shakespeare's *comedy of nature*—comedy, that is, in which "folly is indigenous to the soil, and shoots out with native, happy, unchecked luxuriance . . . absurdity has every encouragement afforded it, and nonsense has room to flourish in . . . nothing is stunted by the churlish, icy hand of indifference or severity, and as there is no attempt at imposition, the spectators rather receive pleasure from humoring the inclinations of the persons they laugh at, than wish to give them pain by exposing their absurdity."

Not even to the overtopping tragic visions is the final reality of life and imagination in these comedies inferior. Indeed, the tragic impulse—the perspective of attrition or splendid loss, the dazzle and mesmerism of doom—is native to us still, but the kind of *feeling* which flows through "Twelfth Night" like a molten loveliness seems to me forever irrecoverable. Think, for example, of what Shaw, what Anouilh or Mr. Tennessee Williams might have done with the quantity of Viola, her supple, elusive essence! And if we take the body of the play but as the shadow of its poetry—the prison, as it were, of its vision—what must have been the reality?

All productions of "Twelfth Night," I have inferred, founder on this poetry and inward music: Virginia Woolf despaired of its ever being released, and turned from the stage to the library and the mind spinning a tensile web of "apples falling, and the toll of a church bell, and an owl's fantastic flight." The comedy acts with more of an ease, and well acted it is by The Shakespearwrights, notably by Mr. Philip Lawrence as a pursey, spindle-shanked Aguecheek. The largest single excellence is Mr. Roger Starr's Feste, that most tolerable of Shakespeare's fools, whose dying melodic falls ravish the ear: Mr. Starr is the production's luminous and dilating center. Against these pleasures, we must charge too much romping and furious by-play; an Olivia wanting in grace of spirit, and a prosy Orsino. The Viola is plausible and sincere, the Malvolio a shade too leering, even fatuous: the character has his own obscure menace and dark authority. One suggestion: even in so intimate a theater, the players should wear full make-up. It is palpable, in this regard, how the dusky sea captain, rich with piratical glamor, makes in his few scenes a more incisive effect than the, as it were, underdone Orsino. No performance in this "Twelfth Night" compares to Mr. Thomas Barbour's pungently exotic and thrusting Shylock in an earlier Shakespearwright production, but for the most part, Illyria, though not quite Elysium, is well peopled here. (*264 West 87th Street.*)

At Theatre East (*211 East 60th Street*), "The Misanthrope" is being presented in Mr. Richard Wilbur's handsomely achieved translation, and the occasion should be seized.

A collection of theatrical memorabilia on loan from the late Bertolt Brecht's Berliner Ensemble is currently on exhibit at the Low Library of Columbia University (weekdays, two to five p.m.).

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THE SCREEN

A WEAD IN A GARDEN OF CLICHES

THE OPENING scenes of "The Wings of Eagles" show John Wayne, as Frank Wead, a young Navy flier, trying to impress an Army officer (Kenneth Tobey) with his skill. He flies a plane through

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a hangar, endangering both their lives as well as the lives of ground crews, and then buzzes an outdoor Navy tea party in the midst of which he finally crashes. This act, supposedly a joke, sets the tone for the first part of this film, supposedly based on the life and writings of Commander Frank W. "Spig" Wead. Director John Ford can expect no one to take his movie seriously after this start, which is more like a Keystone comedy than anything else.

Perhaps Ford means to portray the irresponsibilities of the Jazz Age that followed World War I. Wead and his fellows behave with an exaggerated boys-will-be-boys carelessness even, strangely enough, when he is trying to impress the powers that be that what we need is a Naval Air Defense. The picture does get serious when it suggests that Wead's neglect of his wife was responsible for her drinking and her neglect of their two little girls. But after "Star Spangled Spig" admits he's been a heel and promises to reform, he falls down a flight of stairs and injures his spine in such a way that it is doubtful that he'll ever walk again. During one of the many hospital scenes that follow, he tells his wife they should go their own ways—but actually he's been going his own way for years.

The rest of this exceedingly long film is taken up with Wead's fight against odds to recover the use of his legs (a fight inspired and helped mainly by a Chief Petty Officer, played by Dan Dailey with a surfeit of good humor), Wead's later work as a playwright ("Ceiling Zero") and Hollywood scriptwriter ("Test Pilot," "They Were Expendable") and his services as a commander during World War II. John Wayne plays the role in a lackadaisical fashion. The result is a curious mixture of fact and fiction, sentiment and cliche.

THERE IS no sentiment in Director Vittorio De Sica's new movie—unless it is a sentimental affection for its locale, the city of Naples. De Sica, who wrote the script with Giuseppe Marotta (author of the book of short stories on which it is based), and Cesare Zavattini, is in love with Naples but he does not glamorize its peoples. "The Gold of Naples" uses four sketches, that are almost plotless but strong on character, to present the Neapolitans as they are—or as the film makers think they are.

In the first episode, the famous clown Toto plays a husband and father whose house has been dominated by a racketeer for the past ten years. Unfortunately Toto's children are enraptured by the bad man, and meek, gentle Toto and his wife have been made miserable. This becomes a sweet-sad tale of a worm turning.

The next episode is a cynical little comedy about a

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pizza maker (Giacomo Furia) and his voluptuous wife (Sophia Loren). One day they suddenly discover that Sophia's emerald ring is missing and, sure it must have fallen into a pizza, they go on a mad chase after that day's customers. Some of their search is very amusing, but the longest part of it, spent in the house of a man (Paola Stoppa) whose wife has just died, takes on a macabre aspect. The ring is returned, finally, by Sophia's lover.

The third sketch, magnificently acted by Vittorio De Sica and a little boy, Piero Bilancioni, is the saddest. It concerns a man who is almost psychopathic on the subject of gambling. When his wealthy wife denies him funds and he can no longer go to the club, he forces his porter's small son to play cards with him. The boy, hating this pastime, always wins; and the gambler's day is ruined. The sketch ends on a note devoid of hope or joy.

The fourth story, which is the longest and has the most complete plot, is equally cheerless, but at least it comes to a finale that suggests things may improve in the future. It is about a prostitute (Silvano Mangano) who accepts an offer of marriage through an intermediary. After the ceremony and the elegant reception the bride learns from the groom (Erno Crisa) that she will be a wife in name only. He, feeling guilty over the suicide of a girl whom he did not love, has dedicated his life to suffering, and he thinks he will suffer most by humiliating himself in this way. In a rage of fury, the bride leaves his house—but later, in the cold bleak night, she reconsiders.

Obviously De Sica, like most other good film directors, has stacked his cards to suit his purpose. This is not the sunny Naples of song he's celebrating, but the Naples he wants to see.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

Critics' Choices of Catholic Books

JAMES FINN

THE *Catholic Approach to Protestantism. By George H. Tavard. A. A. Harper. $2.50.* Because Catholic-Protestant relations in this country tend to receive most attention when they are most strained, when, for example, one religious group feels that its rights are disregarded and its motives impugned by another, the significant changes in the climate of these relations are too easily overlooked. Father Tavard's book may well be a truer indication of these changes than press stories, for he is one of a growing group of scholars, charitable and well-informed, who are reassessing the historic breach of the Reformation in terms that are meaningful for our times.

The Spirit and Forms of Protestantism. By Louis Bouyer. Newman. $3.75. Father Bouyer, a French Oratorian and former Lutheran minister, writes with deep sympathy and understanding of "the positive principles of the Reformation." Catholics and Protestants are, of course, divided by doctrinal differences. But the abyss between them has been unnecessarily widened by misplaced loyalties and obstructive traditions, by a lack of both scholarship and charity. Father Bouyer has worked to narrow this abyss by removing unnecessary differences. If his book gains the reception it merits, it will encourage a fruitful exchange on matters of importance to both Catholic and Protestant.

The Mentor Book of Religious Verse. Edited by Horace Gregory and Marya Zaturenska. New American Library. $.50. This fine anthology has the combined virtues that only the finest possess: it is both original and interesting. There are expected poets such as Dante, Milton, and Rilke, Crashaw, Herbert, Hopkins and Donne. But truly religious poems from Hardy, Kipling, Pope, James Russell Lowell and John Banister Tabb will bring some surprises. And fine lesser known poets such as Wilfred Watson and Sean Jennet are also included. Horace Gregory contributes a thoughtful introduction.

The Presence of Grace. By J. F. Powers. Doubleday. $2.95. Readers of The Commonweal scarcely need an introduction to J. F. Powers, and this note is more a reminder than an appreciation. In this collection of stories Mr. Powers reveals again intimate knowledge and sure control of the material into which he has such keen insight—the lives of pastors, curates and parishioners.

ANNE FREMANTLE

THE NUN'S Story. By Kathryn Hulme. Little, Brown. $4. A biography unique in its osmotic quality: the author has explored the life of her subject, a Belgian nun working as a nurse for many years in the Congo, and has distilled the heroism, the holiness, and the tragedy—the tragedy "that we are not saints"—into a story as exciting as it is profound.

The Presence of Grace. By J. F. Powers. Doubleday. $2.95. Incisive, terse, compassionate, Mr. Powers is at his ironic best in these stories of priests as seen by their cats and their catechists.

Silence in Heaven. By Thomas Merton. T. Y. Crowell. $7.95. A superb attempt to render in language the daily round of the monastic life. Liturgy, work, prayer—all are pictured in wonderful photographs, economical, moving and valid on every level. This is as satisfying as any transcription of reality can be, and whets the appetite, as it should, for what only the reality can satisfy.

The Centuries of Santa Fe. By

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Paul Horgan. Dutton. $5. The biography of an old city, told with controlled detail and a wonderful sweep of view. An admirable job.

A Good Man is Hard to Find. By Flannery O'Connor. Harcourt, Brace. $3.50. Astonishingly adult and profound short stories by the most seriously theological and competent of women novelists. These earthy stories of the South are by a talent who bids fair to be a Catholic Turgeniev. (Recently reissued as a paperback.)

The Malefactors. By Caroline Gordon. Harcourt, Brace. $4. A well constructed tale of rich literati, some of whom finally arrive at life.

GEORGE G. HIGGINS

THE SOCIAL Thought of the World Council of Churches. By Edward Duff, S.J. Association Press. $7.50. The end product of several very fruitful years of research in Europe and the United States, Father Duff's masterly study will long remain a classic in its field. It would be impossible to find and difficult even to imagine a more objective and more irenic study of the social teaching of one religious body by a member of another. Father Duff, in addition to being a courteous and conscientious scholar, is also a gifted literary stylist who has, mercifully, broken all the rules of the game by writing a doctoral dissertation as though it were meant to be read by people who have respect and even a certain affection for the English language. It is good to know that he has recently been appointed editor *ad interim* of the excellent Jesuit monthly, *Social Order,* which we enthusiastically recommend to the readers of The Commonweal.

Son of the Church. By Louis Lochet. Fides. $4.50. Aptly characterized by another reviewer as "the apostle to the apostolate," Father Lochet has written one of the best books we have ever read on apostolic spirituality. It is a rare combination of profound theology and deep psychological insight into the trials and temptations and the hopes and aspirations of the contemporary layman who feels so

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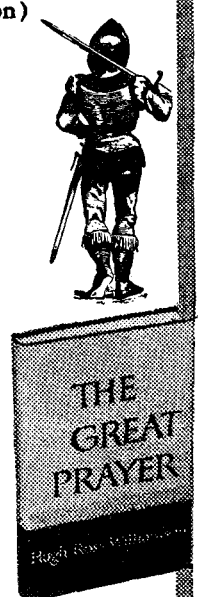

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helpless in the face of his staggering apostolic responsibilities.

AFL-CIO — Labor United. By Arthur J. Goldberg. McGraw-Hill. $5. This will long remain the standard exegesis of the constitution of the new AFL-CIO. But Mr. Goldberg—who, as General Counsel of the old CIO, was one of the principal architects of labor unity—is no mere technician. He is a labor philosopher and statesman and a talented writer who never loses sight of the forest for the trees even when he is explaining the minutiae of the new AFL-CIO constitution and the several preliminary documents which prepared the way for labor unity.

The Organization Man. By William H. Whyte, Jr. Simon and Schuster. $5. This may not be the most important book of the year but, to our way of thinking, it is the most stimulating. The margins of every other page of our own copy are marked with N.B.'s and exclamation points. Only a few are checked with question marks, indicating our lack of agreement with the author's understandably vague and indefinite solution to the problem which he has so forcefully posed. The problem, in brief, is the growing conflict between the Ethics of Individualism of an earlier day and the Social Ethic of the contemporary Organization — the giant corporation, the government research laboratory, the multi-million dollar foundation, etc. Mr. Whyte of *Fortune* magazine—a sociologist without guile and, even more important, without an ounce of jargon in his makeup—is nothing short of brilliant in his highly readable analysis of this problem. But when he finally gets around to telling us what to do about it, his nerve fails him and, in the end, he is content to say simply that the Organization Man (presumably as an isolated individual) must "fight" the Organization—"not stupidly, or selfishly . . . but fight he must." That's not as easy as it sounds. But, in any event, Mr. Whyte's book at least raises the right questions about the Organization—and that's saying a lot.

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By James MacGregor Burns. Harcourt, Brace. $5.75. This is a first-rate "political" biography of F.D.R. —scholarly, perceptive, extraordinarily non-partisan and extremely well written. Professor Burns has his own theory of political leadership but, to his credit, he doesn't try too hard to force it on the reader. And even if the reader has previously read all of the other books about Roosevelt, he will still learn a great deal from this one.

SISTER MARIS STELLA

THE NUN'S *Story. By Kathryn Hulme. Atlantic-Little, Brown.* $4. No other book of the past year has evoked more discussion in print, nor more respectful comment on the dedicated service of Catholic sisters from non-Catholic reviewers. The fact that Sister Luke's is the intelligence through which Miss Hulme transmits the story necessarily limits the view she gives of the religious life. It may well be distorted, but not intentionally so. The impressions made on those who reject and those who accept a way of life are bound to differ. But this does not invalidate the literary excellence of Miss Hulme's performance. The story is carefully planned, and its outcome is clear from the beginning.

Sister Luke emerges as a believable character, troubled in soul, tireless in her service to humanity, but cut off from the deep springs of joy. She is also cut off in some undefinable way from the other nuns in the story. These are, with a few exceptions, portrayed as women of extraordinary faith and charity, but the reader sees them through a grille of distance. They seem to be little more than background for the central character who, though exteriorly conformed to what appears to have been a most exacting rule, remained spiritually unchanged. That her decision to leave the convent comes clear when she hears of her father's death would be a touch of rare psychological insight were this a novel. But it is not a novel. One wishes it had been published as such.

The Centuries of Santa Fe. By Paul Horgan. Dutton. $5. Mr. Hor-

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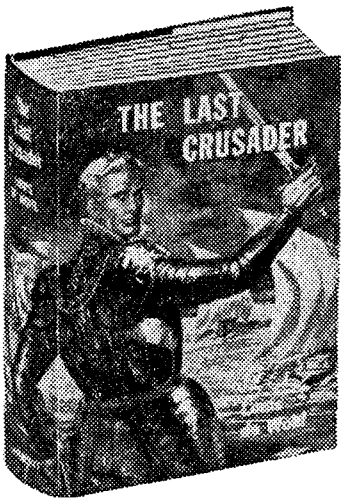

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THE *Cypresses Believe in God. By José Maria Gironella. Knopf. Two Volumes. $10.00.* This is a book that needs mentioning again, due to the incredible obtuseness of some of its reviewers who denigrated this epic of the Spanish civil war because it was written on the wrong side, as if one had to blacken a masterly work because the master wrote a human, humane and warm document of the heart-rending struggle from a non-congenial vantage point. If liberals are rightly shocked by rumors of pressure exerted for sectarian reasons against a documentary movie which is great although definitely partisan, then the same liberals ought to have spoken up when a first-class critic in a first-class magazine tore one of the greatest books of our decade to pieces because it presented a warm-hearted account of lovable people straying into Franco's camp after witnessing beastly cruelties on the side of a very questionable "democratic" uprising. Besides, Mr. Gironella manages to stay out of narrow partisanship and avoids

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Liturgical Piety. By Louis Bouyer. University of Notre Dame Press. $4.75. No educated Catholic who is interested in the sacramental life of his Church, its vicissitudes in history and, now, its meaning for modern man can afford to ignore this book. It is a bit prolix in parts, but at least the first chapters should be studied by all who use a missal, attend at dialogue mass and feel relief over the reform of the Holy Week. Here are the answers to many a question that has caused an intellectual malaise among thinking Catholics. It also burns a few idols and refocuses the true task of the liturgical movement by reminding us historically that it did not all start with our own reading of Guéranger. It is radical in the good sense in its long overdue readjustment—which some have felt rather merciless—of our views on liturgical authorities.

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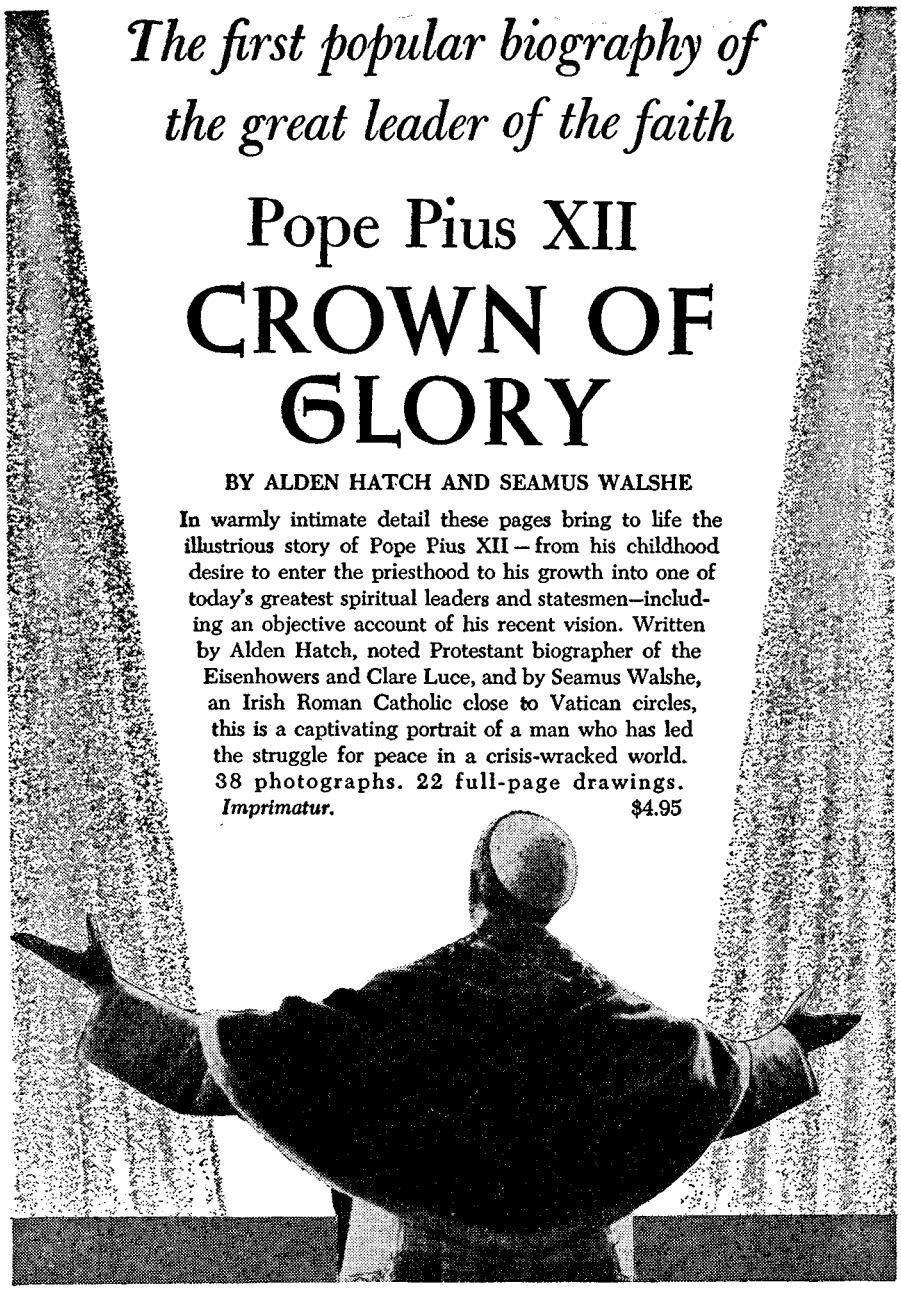

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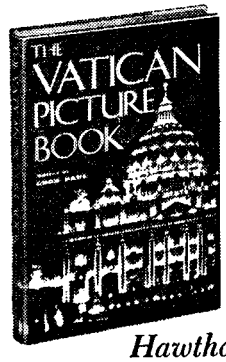

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hensive effort to let us look at Paideia as it truly was. It is without blinkers and frank and may help all educators, even the now dethroned parents, to learn from history. In spite of the fact that the author is a very learned man, the reading of this book is fun, because he has made it interesting to all with a healthy dose of intellectual curiosity.

The Worker Priests: A Collective Documentation. Macmillan. $5. Although it is written from a partisan position and an anguished groan of charisma verus authority, mature Christians ought not to pass this over, even though it is not altogether edifying. Catholics are not so naive as to suspect nothing of the stresses and strains that periodically wrack the living flesh of Christ's mystical body. A bishop, no mean expert on the subject and a great lover of his heroine, once told me that he could not see how Bishop Cauchon could have come to any verdict but the stake for St. Joan of Arc, given the circumstances and the fantastic and unusual claims of the saint and her day. France is the classical land of the lucid conflict: here is another one. Read with filial compassion for authority forced to be adamant, with deep sympathy for a group of noble and martyr-like priests, the lecture should bring about one thing: an examination of our consciences, not only as to our smugness and soft way of life, but also as to our reaction to books like these. Hide it from the immature potential reader and don't worry about those outside the Church: they like us honest.

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Love of Our Neighbor. Edited by Albert Ple, O.P. Translated by Donald Attwater and R. F. Trevett. Templegate. $3.95. A rare and welcome work—a series of essays by distinguished contributers who radically examine the theology, metaphysics and psychology of Christian charity. In its awareness of complexity, this work marks a kind of "break-through" in contemporary spirituality, which has tended to regard charity in isolated reference to personal perfection and has paid too little attention to the etiology of charity.

The Splendour of the Church. By Henri de Lubac, S.J. Sheed and Ward. $3.50. The distinguished French theologian deals in this work with the abiding paradox of the Church, at once the spotless Bride of Christ and the repository of so much imperfection, mediocrity and sin in her members. The centrality of Père de Lubac's thought is nowhere better displayed than in this profound meditation on the mystery which is the Church.

LEO R. WARD

THE MATTERS dealt with in these books come from several contexts and seem to me to "add up." Also the authors are men from different nations, and yet belong to one world.

A History of Education in Antiquity. By H. I. Marrou. Translated by George Lamb. Sheed and Ward. $7.50. This book is rich, full, documented, equipped with over a hundred pages of additional notes and with pages of references and an analytical index (all of this equipment at the back), and yet it is a simple book that is a joy to read. It surpasses anything we had ever read on "education," and we think it should supersede many other works in both the history and the philosophy of that subject. The author's synthesis, at the beginning of the second part, of Hellenistic education, culture and civilization is remarkable.

The Two-Edged Sword. By John L. McKenzie, S. J. Bruce. $4.50. Here a scholar, after covering many studies and many fields, deliberately omits all notes and titles, so as to make it readily possible for readers to follow this not too difficult work on the Old Testament. It is for all who read the Bible. In helping us to grasp what Jeremiah meant by asking his people to embrace evil, and what is meant by saying that a man cannot know God till he knows evil, it may help us to grasp the mystery of iniquity itself. Still, we would like to know who Johannes Pedersen is, and where he said such and such a thing.

Documents of American Catholic History. By John Tracy Ellis. Bruce. $8.75. This is a very useful work even for the layman and the outsider, putting things together from the beginning until now: Jogues, Catharine Tegahouita, Elder, Tabb, Al Smith and Virgil Michel. The simple introductions and footnoting are invaluable for us who do not know this history.

The End of the Modern World. By Romano Guardini. Translated by Joseph Theman and Herbert Burke. Sheed and Ward. $2.75. This author is always like an Isaias, speaking from this time and this people and yet speaking the things of God and as if out of heaven. His point in the present little book is as follows. The ancient Western world came to things with a simplicity and freshness, but was necessarily stopped by "things": that is as far as it could be expected to get. The mark of the Christian world, even of the Jewish world, is transcendence. The Christian faced up to things. He had not the slightest fear of reality or existence. This was largely because he could so readily

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go beyond temporal things. His weakness was that, having no great need of things, he could relatively skip them, and he made no exact empirical study of them. Early modern man, such as Bruno, Rousseau, Spinoza and Goethe, also took directly to nature "as that totality of things and events which man encountered around and about him." Modern man is caught in a trap. He cannot be an ancient Greek, he cannot with the Christian accept and transcend nature, but, possessed by what Maritain has called a "titanic demonism," he is no longer in the presence of a "natural nature." The natural must be both defended and regained.

FREDERICK D. WILHELMSEN

AN INQUIRY *into Soviet Mentality. By Gerhard Niemeyer and John S. Reshetar, Jr. Praeger. $2.75.* The authors have given us a pitiless analysis of the Soviet mentality. As it is essentially irrational, grounded on a principled refusal to accept existence—Marxism-Leninism cannot be understood by men who have not undergone, at least sympathetically, the experience of the Communist mind. This book should be linked with the conclusions reached by Eric Voegelin in his *The New Science of Politics.* Both studies, while written with different points of departure, drive home one inexorable conclusion: Marxism cannot be met by persuasion. The cemetery of Hungary is the answer to those critics who have caviled with the author's basic thesis.

The End of the Modern World. By Romano Guardini. Sheed and Ward. $2.75. Years of suffering and meditation and prayer went into the making of this little book. Perhaps the most prophetic of Guardini's writings, it confronts us all with a grim vision of the world to come. Somber, eschewing both optimism and pessimism, the eminent German theologian contents himself with tracing the death of the modern world. The collapse of the triune idols of Nature, Personality, and Culture under the hammer of naked secularism and unbridled technol-

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CRITICS

James Finn is an associate editor of The Commonweal.

Anne Fremantle, author and anthologist, contributes frequently to American reviews.

Monsignor George G. Higgins is director of the Social Action Department of NCWC.

Sister Maris Stella is Chairman of the English Department at the College of St. Catherine.

Father J. N. Moody teaches at Notre Dame College of Staten Island.

Father H. A. Reinhold, a well-known writer on the Liturgical Movement, contributes frequently to The Commonweal.

Philip Scharper, until this week an associate editor of The Commonweal, has now joined the editorial staff of Sheed & Ward.

Father Leo R. Ward of Notre Dame is the author of *Christian Ethics*.

Frederick D. Wilhelmsen is a member of the philosophy department of Santa Clara University. His most recent book is *Omega: Last of the Barques*.

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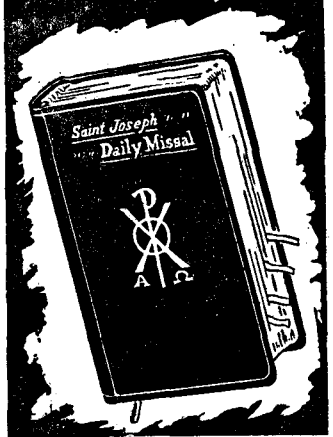

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